



November 2014

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PAID & VOLUNTEER STAFF OF RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK

**Upcoming Events**

**November 4**

Ladies Luncheon  
@Applebee's, 11:30am  
call Marge @ 533-4595

**November 8**

Polar Express Training &  
Rehearsal Day 9am-2pm

**\*Note:** There is an engine  
crew Stationmaster meeting at  
2pm in the Crew Caboose

**November 11**

Veterans Day, special trains at  
1, 2 and 3pm, Veterans ride  
free!

**November 22**

Train operations rehearsal for  
Polar Express

**November 28, 29, 30**

Thanksgiving Weekend  
10am-2pm Speeder rides, belt  
shop demonstrations and ac-  
tivities (no trains scheduled)

**December 3**

Polar Express dress rehearsal  
trains @ 4 & 6pm (possible  
8pm too)

**December 11**

Annual Christmas Ladies  
Luncheon and ornament ex-  
change, at Carol Mabe's  
house. Info: 984-1210

**Polar Express Train Dates:**

December 5,6,7,12,13,14,19,  
20 & 21

**December 21**

Polar Express 'After Glow Par-  
ty' at National Hotel  
9:30-11:30pm

**December 29 & 30**

Un-decorating the Polar  
decorations begins  
volunteer help needed  
10am-2pm

**January 24**

Annual Volunteer Recognition  
Dinner at Black Oak Casino  
Resort 5-8:30pm

This years theme: Hollywood  
Glamour! Come in your finest  
vintage or modern dress for  
the ladies and tux or suit coats  
the gentlemen.

**Interpretation:**

**How Do We Do It?**

In last month's issue we touched briefly on "Why Do We Do Interpretation." Now, let's discuss a little on "How Do We Do It?" Much of this information comes directly from the manual from California State Parks, "Basic Interpretation Learning System." Research suggests that on average only 10% of what is verbally communicated is retained by the receiver.

Therefore, it is important for you, the interpreter, to know and understand all the methods and techniques for successfully communicating to our visitors. It also underscores the importance of creating emotional and intellectual connections between Railtown and your visitor's, rather than being a simple information giver. All of us are familiar with a visitor's first needs, which are to tell them where the bathroom is, orient them to the layout of the park, and where to buy tickets.

Once we are passed their orientation to our park, then your job as an interpreter begins. Whether working as a tour guide, car host, roundhouse host or even as a greeter, the visitor is now in your care, and you must establish yourself as a credible interpreter. Following are some of the issues you must consider if you are to be credible in a visitor's eyes: 1) Content: Do you know what you are talking about? 2) Confidence: Effective eye contact will allow a visitor to perceive that you are honest, warm and hospitable, and know what you are talking about; voice quality also reflects your confidence (meek, mild and high pitched voices are not thought to be as confident and don't command attention as much as a low pitched authoritative voice); 3) Appearance: Making sure you are always neat, clean, and have the proper uniform or costume is important to your credibility as an interpreter 4) Passion, Sincerity & Enthusiasm: The 'father' of modern interpretation, Freeman Tilden, called these the "priceless ingredients". Visitors will sense and respond to an interpreter who loves and is interested in what he or she is talking about.

The next step in our communication process to our visitors is the message we want to share. This is called the THEME. We are so very fortunate to have a Master Interpretive Plan (currently being written) which will be delivered in 2015. It will contain very clear themes and sub topics essential to interpreting our State Park. Once in place our Feb-Mar training series will support this plan and all of us who work as interpreters will be asked to govern our presentations to visitors by its content.



Tom Cahoon leading a tour through our belt driven machine shop

## The Interpretive Master Plan Project at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park

Our interpretive plan project is moving right along. Early in October, we had some intensive stakeholders meetings with our contractor, Ron Thomson, for three consecutive days. These meetings were well attended by staff, volunteers, and community members. The final day of meetings was a teacher workshop event. These workshops gave the team an opportunity to further refine the stories we should be telling about our historic site, and the ways we may be able to best tell them. The teacher workshop provided the foundation for bringing back our school days events, as well as other events that may in the future foster more stewardship of Railtown 1897 among the youth.

Where is the project now? Due to the Polar Express event, we anticipate moving the schedule for completion back until we can devote more focus and time to this important part of park planning. It is imperative that our volunteers be involved in this project, because they will be the ones doing the interpretation. The interpretive master plan is carefully being revised and rewritten by a team of State Parks employees, but it is not too late to be involved. If you feel passionate about the messages we will be telling to visitors in the future, please ask Dave or Lisa for the latest drafts. Your comments are part of the process. We need you.

### What is going on in the historic blacksmith shop? Our gift to future generations!

By Lisa DeLacy, Curator

You may have noticed that the blacksmith shop has been slowly evolving for a few months. Volunteer Jerry Sterni has been working in the roundhouse forge area and the old blacksmith shop for about a year. He has been documenting, cleaning, and identifying some of the old tools and equipment and setting up the work space to have a more authentic feel to it. His work continues to help with the new blacksmith shop inventory project underway at the park.



The blacksmith shop was built in 1898 and was in operation until the 1930s. During the depression years, the shop was closed up as a storage room, and forge work was moved into the roundhouse area, where you see it today. The historic shop is roomy and well equipped with two forges, a heat treat oven, a power hammer, an enormous swage block, and multitudes of tools. In the early 1990s, the shop was retrofitted and a new foundation was put in to support the structure. New windows were installed, and unfortunately some of the functionality of the space was compromised. There is no record of a thorough inventory of the tools, and so the curatorial team is at work to establish a base line of inventory and conditions of the contents of the building. The tools will be cleaned, assessed, photographed, and treated with a rust inhibitor. Shop made tools that are unique will then be cataloged into TMS, the statewide collections management database. Tools that are irreplaceable and fragile may be stored in a more secure building. In the 5 years I have worked here, the blacksmith shop has been the target of thieves at least twice, but without a true inventory, we have no way of knowing what might be missing. Every time a little piece of this historic site walks away, we lose part of our history.

Enter the blacksmith shop and take in the multitude of items. Though it seems daunting, our curatorial team forges (pun intended!) onward. I hope everyone can appreciate the value of this work. Leaving good documentation for our future generations is the best gift we can give to those who will be the stewards of the Historic Jamestown Roundhouse and Shops in the next century. I extend kudos to Jerry Sterni, Ken Rattenne, and Jeannie Teschke for their dedication. If you have an interest in the meticulous, methodical, rusty, and dusty work of collections, please send me an email or give me a call. This is a huge undertaking, and we always need your help.



## Railtown News

### **Annual Christmas Ornament Exchange**

The Railtown ladies annual Christmas luncheon and ornament exchange will take place on Thursday, December 11th at 11:30am at Carol Mabe's house. Call 984-1210 for information

### **Polar Express Cast Party at the National Hotel in Jamestown**

An after glow party for our entire cast of volunteers and staff will take place after the last train on Sunday, December 21st, from 9:30 to 11:30pm at the National Hotel. Hors d'oeuvres will be provided, plus drinks will be available for sale in the bar.

### **No Lunches For Thursdays in December**

As it was last year, there will be no lunches prepared by the Railtown ladies in December. Thursday lunches will return January 8.

### **Important Polar Express Training Dates**

Many of you are volunteering for the Polar Express event. If at all possible, please plan to attend two important dates: Saturday, November 8, 9am-2pm for training and rehearsal. Also Wednesday, December 3rd will be a full dress rehearsal with train rides and passengers. Lunch will be served at 12:30pm. I understand on at least one train, our passengers will be special needs kids. **\*Note:** After the Polar training on 11-8, there will be an Engine Crew/ Stationmaster debriefing at 2pm in the crew caboose.

### **Polar Express Decorating/ Help Needed**

For those of you who have volunteered to help decorate for Polar (or anyone interested in helping) here is the current decorating plan and dates:

Tuesday thru Thursday, November 4, 5 & 6: Car 14

Sunday & Monday, November 9 & 10: Car 597

Thursday thru Saturday, November 13, 14 & 15: Car 12

Monday thru Thursday, November 17, 18, 19 & 20: 2901 and touch up

### **Thanksgiving Weekend**

We will not be running trains in lieu of our Polar Express event. However we will provide rides with the speeder, and track cars (Model T and Hetch Hetchy car) along with belt shop demonstrations and activities in the Roundhouse. If you can join us on this holiday weekend, we need volunteers for all of these extra activities which will take place from 10am to 2pm all three days, with the morning job briefings at 9:30am. Please call in for scheduling.

### **2015 Training Dates/ Mark Your Calendars**

January 24: Volunteer Recognition Dinner  
@ Black Oak Casino

January 31: New Volunteer Open House/  
10am-1pm

February 14: New Volunteer Orientation/  
10am-4pm

(It's also Roundhouse Day 10am-2:30pm)

February 21: Volunteer Training/ 9am-3pm

February 28: Volunteer Training/ 9am-3pm  
GCOR Training/8am-4pm

March 7: No training

March 14: Volunteer Training/ 9am-3pm

March 21: No training

March 28: Car Host Training & Practice  
Trains



Farewell to an outstanding volunteer! Circumstances required us to rather quickly plan a going away party for Laverne Coon who is moving to be near her family in Wisconsin. The highlight was when David Deutsch surprised her, pouring a bucket of candy on her!



**PO Box 1250**  
**Jamestown, CA 95327**  
**Return Service Requested**

**TO:**



**Depot Store-** (209) 984-3953  
**Volunteer Desk-** (209) 984-4408  
**Volunteer Website-** <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers>  
**Railtown Blog-** [www.railtown1897.wordpress.com](http://www.railtown1897.wordpress.com)  
**Newsletter Editor—** [Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov)  
**Crew Caboose-** (209) 984-0352



### **Railtown Paid and Volunteer Staff Contact Information**

*(all area codes are 209)*

<b>Kim Baker</b> , Park Superintendent	984-4622	<a href="mailto:Kim.Baker@parks.ca.gov">Kim.Baker@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>George Sapp</b> , Railroad Restoration Lead Worker (DSLE)	774-6368	<a href="mailto:George.Sapp@parks.ca.gov">George.Sapp@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Lisa DeLacy</b> , State Park Curator I (DER)	984-3119	<a href="mailto:Lisa.DeLacy@parks.ca.gov">Lisa.DeLacy@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Karen Kling</b> , Park Interpretive Specialist	984-8703	<a href="mailto:Karen.Kling@parks.ca.gov">Karen.Kling@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Ryan Richelson</b> , Maintenance Supervisor	984-3115	<a href="mailto:Ryan.Richelson@parks.ca.gov">Ryan.Richelson@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Rob Buchanan</b> , Park Maintenance Worker I	984-8702	<a href="mailto:Rob.Buchanan@parks.ca.gov">Rob.Buchanan@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Danny Taylor</b> , Park Maintenance Assistant	984-8702	<a href="mailto:Danny.Taylor@parks.ca.gov">Danny.Taylor@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Dave Rainwater</b> , Senior Park Aide & Volunteer Coordinator	984-4408	<a href="mailto:Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov">Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Carl Rudolph</b> , Fire Patrol Coordinator	586-9905	<a href="mailto:cakr@sonnet.com">cakr@sonnet.com</a>
<b>Karen Ethier</b> , Ticket Agent Coordinator	471-7525	<a href="mailto:kmethier@gmail.com">kmethier@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ron White</b> , Stationmaster Coordinator	551-7087	<a href="mailto:rbarryw@att.net">rbarryw@att.net</a>